

16,
"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

AN ANSWER

TO

A PAMPHLET,

RECENTLY ADDRESSED

TO THE

Episcopalians of Pennsylvania,

UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF

PLAIN TRUTH,

BY

PLAIN FACT.

PHILADELPHIA:

1827.

N. B. For a notice of a production lately issued, entitled, "An Appeal to the Lay Members," &c. and signed "An Episcopalian," see the Appendix to this pamphlet.

AN ANSWER, &c.

To answer "PLAIN TRUTH" in his own manner and spirit, would be comparatively an easy task, and one very pleasant to corrupt nature. But this I shall strive to avoid, First; because I believe it is not the course that real wisdom dictates. The cause of scriptural truth and piety never gains by ill-natured sneers, reproaches, or misrepresentations. A simple and sincere spirit, plain and undisguised statements, are her only legitimate weapons. These will be found in the end best in a good cause, and best for him who employs them.

And, secondly; I cannot imitate "PLAIN TRUTH," because I *feel* a paramount obligation laid upon me to follow him, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

I would wish then, in all that I shall say upon this occasion, to manifest nothing but the "meekness of wisdom," and the spirit of love. For just so far as what I accomplish proves to be "a work of faith," performed in "the patience of hope," so far, and no farther, do I believe, that it will tend to advance the divine glory and the interests of that "Kingdom, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But if after all, in any thing I am about to say, I unwittingly offend, ("for in many things we offend all,") I would here humbly beg those whom I may sin against, to pity me, and pray for me,—as they would have forgiveness at God's hands.

O, it is a solemn thing to put forth the hand for "the ark of the Lord;"—to attempt the defence of the truth and the cause of Jesus! And when I reflect, on the one hand, upon the awful responsibilities which devolve upon him who engages in this high and holy work, and consider how "great grace" is needful for such a person; and when on the other, I look at my own poor attainments, I am ready to shrink back at the very threshold of my undertaking. But I would stay myself upon Him who has said, "my grace is sufficient for thee;—my strength is made perfect in weakness." And when I call to mind that He has oftentimes made the feeblest of his people

to subserve his own glorious purposes, I am encouraged to proceed.

I am well aware that even a defence of truth and righteousness bearing the character, that I hope the subsequent pages will;—a simple and sincere spirit, plain and undisguised statements;—such a defence, I am conscious, will be destitute of many advantages to secure the attention of readers.

Carnal policy would suggest bitter retort, taking strokes of humour, imposing flourishes of rhetoric,—in a word, all the dread artillery, which depraved worldly wisdom is wont to employ, to destroy character and batter down the cause of truth. Only forge such weapons, and you will find multitudes to admire them, and many to seize hold upon them and employ them at your will. Such indeed are the devices of party men to promote party purposes. But not having these unhallowed objects in view, I need not their appropriate instruments. *Of all men living, I believe the case of the partisan in religion, whether he be contending for or against "the truth as it is in Jesus,"—the case of the partisan is the most hopeless.* The very situation of the man encircles him in a deeper and a deadlier delusion; and seldom, very seldom, I fear, does such an individual become sensible of his folly and his wretchedness, till “he opens his eyes in hell, being in torment.” O, that worldly men would either “repent and be converted,” or stand aloof from the cause of God! they only injure their own souls, and divide and pollute the church of Christ.

Such being my convictions, I dare not seek to make proselytes to a party;—I dare not inveigle any man into such a situation. Hence every thing like unholy sarcasm, every thing like plausible declamation, to conceal the truth, or keep the real matter at issue out of view, I would fain avoid. Be it my endeavour in an humble and prayerful dependence upon the grace of the Lord Jesus, to write in such a manner, and with such a spirit as will please only the honest inquirer after truth. This course, will, I am thoroughly persuaded, be found in the end, to be the best policy.

Before proceeding, however, to the subject before me, there are three facts I would beg the reader to keep constantly in view; First, the friends of “truth and piety” in our Zion, or as they are sometimes termed, *the evangelical portion of the Church, formed one-half of the Clergy, and a very large majority of the lay members of the last convention.* For the correctness of this statement I refer to the Journal.

2d. I would beg my reader to bear in mind, that I do not undertake to defend the friends of “truth and piety” in every thing. Though I verily believe that these brethren are, in the main, constrained by the love of Christ, and actuated by a

desire to promote the glory of God, and the great cause of scriptural piety; yet they are fallible and sinful men, and therefore not to be commended or even excused in all they may have said or done. So well do I know them, that I feel persuaded, they themselves would be the last to require of me an unqualified defence of their characters and their conduct. Is there not something in you, my beloved brethren, that would rather prompt you to mourn over your defects and your defilements, and to "put your hand to your mouth, and your mouth in the dust, and say, unclean! unclean!"

3d. When I speak of High Churchmen as opposing evangelical "truth and piety," I speak of them *not as individuals, but as a body.* I believe there are good men sometimes to be found engaged in almost the worst causes. As a system I am conscientiously compelled, after long, careful, and I trust, devout examination, to reject that which passes under the name of High Churchmanship; and the advocates of that system I am therefore obliged to resist. But with respect to them *personally* I say nothing, I judge nothing;—I would fain cast over them that broad mantle which hath inscribed upon it "charity hopeth all things."

We are now prepared to take up the attack of "Plain Truth."

I. I shall first notice his "*charges against the Evangelical Ministers and people of this diocese as a body.*"

1st. They are guilty of consulting and acting together professedly for the purpose of promoting the interests of scriptural "truth and piety." And in accordance with the spirit of this association, they vote *for* the friends of their cause, and *against* its opposers;—and in general, zealously employ all their influence for its support.

This charge forms the principal burden of the first seven pages, and is again and again repeated, under different shapes, in other parts of the "Address."*

* Plain Truth, in order to fix upon the evangelical portion of the church the charge of having struck the first blow, gives a detail of the proceedings of the Convention at Norristown in 1824; and to show that they have persevered in their hostility, notices the transactions of the following year at St. Paul's church, Philadelphia. By these provocations, he would lead his reader to suppose that High Churchmen were "constrained to assume the attitude of a party."† In the next Convention indeed at Reading, they took their revenge, and by one fell swoop, removed every evangelical man from office.

But suppose, in order to impress *my* reader with the idea that High Churchmen had made the first onset, I had simply gone back as far as this affair at Reading,—what would Plain Truth have said?—Doubtless

In answer to this weighty accusation, I will venture to say, as an individual, that Plain Truth might have spared himself the trouble of its substantiation by a reference to the past history of the Church,—(he might have spared himself this trouble;)—because the friends of truth and piety, have always gloried in harmoniously supporting their cause, both as a duty and a privilege. In days of old, the friends of the same cause,—“they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another;” and whilst a proud, ungodly world, derided and opposed them, they had the consolation of knowing that “the Lord hearkened and heard,”—looked down upon them with favour, and would cause them to prosper. And at a still later period in the history of the Church, an eminent associate of the same despised company, thought this duty important enough to make it the subject of an earnest exhortation;—“Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and *in nothing terrified by your adversaries.*”

But, 2dly. The friends of “Truth and Piety,” (who, be it repeated, formed a very large majority of the late convention,) are “privately banded together,”* hold “private meetings,”† are “pledged”‡ to one another; and by these “dark”§ attempts, “destroy”¶ all freedom of voting,” and thus seek to accomplish their object. So much for the charges of “Plain Truth.”

Now I will simply state the “Plain Facts.” The Evangelical members of the Convention held *public meeting, in a public place,—the doors being constantly open, and every one who chose was at liberty to attend.* In this *open manner* they assembled together once or twice daily during the Convention, for the purpose of prayer, and mutual consultation upon the solemn concern that had called them together. Every individual present was *free to express his opinion, and to pursue that course, both in these public meetings and the Convention, which his own conscience approved.* And here, be it recorded with humble thankfulness to Him who overruleth the counsels of the heart, that in no one essential point did these persons disagree;—THEIR RESO-

he would have accused me of disingenuousness in not carrying my inquiries farther back. But *this is precisely the unfairness of which he himself is guilty.* Whom did High Churchmen remove from office at the Convention at Lancaster in 1823?—When as yet, *Plain Truth acknowledges, the evangelical portion of the church had not taken a separate stand.*

It would be quite an easy matter to prove almost any point, however false, against any body of persons, however pure, if a writer be allowed to limit his inquiries to just such a period of history as suits his purpose.

I shall notice, in the subsequent pages, other instances of Plain Truth’s disingenuous historical deductions.

* Plain Truth, p. 20. † p. 17. ‡ p. 20. § p. 31. ¶ p. 17.

LUTIONS WERE ALL UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED, and, (as the journal of the Convention shows,) faithfully adhered to.

But is this all? O no, my reader;—after listening to the above charge against the Evangelical portion of the Convention, you would hardly expect to hear, that those who so confidently brought it forward, held themselves—*not public meetings in public places—but private meetings in private places*, to further the election of their candidate, and that some of their delegates declared their reluctance to vote against Mr. Meade, but that they were *pledged so to do!*—For this statement, I say, the ingenuous reader will hardly be prepared, and yet these are *notorious facts*.

3d. The friends of Evangelical religion are charged with an indisposition to submit to the control of the established ecclesiastical authorities.* In proof of this charge, "Plain Truth" asserts that they have established Episcopal Societies, employed a Missionary, and organized a Church in the city of Philadelphia.

Now the question arises, are these things at variance with our ecclesiastical constitution, or are they not? If the Bishop be clothed with papal authority, and the Standing Committee be his conclave, then the case is decided at once; the friends of "truth and piety" have here been guilty of rebelling against the "powers that be."

But if the Episcopal Church is a government and laws which define the duties and secure the rights of each member thereof, then by these laws must we stand or fall. What then are the Plain Facts of the case? With respect to the societies spoken of, they are composed entirely of Episcopalians, and therefore necessarily, according to their several stations, subject to the authority and regulations of the church. As for the missionary, he came into this diocese with the usual canonical testimonials, was regularly received by the Bishop, admitted without a question into the Convention, and stands this moment in exactly the same situation as every other minister of the church.

With respect to the newly-organized Church, (Grace Church,) Plain Truth asserts that this was done "in the face of a Canon;" doubtless he thinks so, but it would have been well for him to have recollected that *assertion is one thing, and proof quite another.*

4. Fourth charge against the Evangelical people of the diocese of Pennsylvania—"They appointed a man to the Convention,

* P. T. p. 12.

who, at the time of his appointment, was not even a member of the Episcopal Church which he represented.”*

What are the plain facts here? Why, the Evangelical portion of the diocese of Pennsylvania had nothing to do with the matter. Mr. John M’Elroy was appointed by the Church at Bristol, *their* representative in the Convention,—his title, with those of some others, was referred by the Convention to a select number of individuals, one half of whom, were of those styling themselves “the friends of the Bishop;”—they reported favourably upon all the titles submitted to them; and finally one of their number, (and one whom the self-styled “friends of the Bishop” claim as their own,) moved that all the persons named in their report “are entitled to seats.” This resolution passed, I believe, without a dissenting voice,—it being *then known*, however, that opposition would be useless.

5. Evangelical people are charged with “organizing new congregations, and attempting to introduce them into the Convention, in order to strengthen their party among the laity.”†

That new congregations, more or less, are almost every year formed in different parts of the diocese, is a Plain Fact; and that such things will continue to occur hereafter, is an event devoutly to be wished for.

Now that the congregations alluded to in the above charge, were not organized to promote the glory of God and the interest of his kingdom, but to serve party purposes;—this is, indeed a grave charge, and one which, it would appear, is much easier made than substantiated. Plain Truth has not advanced a *shadow of proof for it.*

6. The friends of “Truth and Piety” were guilty of republishing an *old* discourse of the Rev. Mr. Meade.‡

Here, again, let us look at Plain Facts. Brother Meade, of Virginia, was held up as a candidate for the Episcopal office of the diocese; some of the friends of the Evangelical cause published, among other of his productions, the *last sermon*, which they knew of, that Mr. Meade had sent to the press; and this they did *in order that every one might see and judge for himself, with respect to the merits of the man.* They felt conscious of no reason to be ashamed of their candidate. Now whether this was “a dark attempt,” or a fair, open, and honest procedure, the persons accused may fearlessly appeal to the public.

7. “They created a fund to defray the expenses of delegates who came down from the country and voted for them.”§

* P. T. p. 16. † p. 16. ‡ p. 17. § p. 16.

This charge, it is well known, has been trumpeted from Dan even to Beersheba, and dwelt upon by Plain Truth and his friends as a crime of the deepest dye. But after all this mighty ado, what does it amount to? What are the plain facts of the case?—Every one who has seriously observed the progress of “the truth as it is in Jesus,” knows that it is chiefly among the poor, the Lord has his people; and no churchman ought to be ignorant that, among us, these poorer members have exactly the same rights with the rich.

Now here is the offence of some of the supporters of Evangelical religion,—they said to their friends throughout the state—if there are any of you who desire, (and are, or shall be regularly appointed,) to come to the next Convention, to exert that influence in the solemn matter to be there acted upon, and in which we are all equally concerned; and if you have not the means of paying your own expenses to the Convention for the exercise of that right which both the Bible and the Canons of the Church give you, then we, whom providence has more abundantly favoured in temporal things, “will be at charges for you.”

Whether this be a deed to be blown about from mouth to mouth, with all the exaggeration of *affected horror*,—or a most noble act of gospel charity, I leave it to Christians to judge. My own heart, I freely confess, is warmed at the bare recital of it: And this I can say without ostentation, because I contributed not one cent to the fund,—God having pleased to dispose my lot among the poor,—though not so poor was I as to be compelled to draw on this *consecrated treasury*.

But here again, my reader, I would call your attention to a fact on the other side. Could you believe it—after all these clamourous attempts to fasten the charge of *bribery* upon the friends of Evangelical religion in the Convention, simply because they were “*at charges*” for their poorer brethren, and after reading the following exquisitely beautiful and pathetic lament, poured out upon this awful deed,—“let modesty hide her head—let piety blush—let religion be clothed in black—let the Church of this diocese tremble;”—*—after listening, I say, to all this outcry, and reading this doleful lamentation, could you think it possible that they who raised the one and wrote the other, did the very same thing themselves? and yet it is the fact!!!

8. They encouraged the Rev. Mr. Nash, Missionary at Green Bay, to continue in Philadelphia till the period of the Convention, that he might there exercise his influence for the Evangelical cause.†

* P. T. p. 24. † p. 17

Be it known, then, to my readers as a notorious fact, that Mr. Nash was one of the first and warmest advocates for the election of Mr. Meade; be it known, also, that High Churchmen endeavoured their utmost both privately and publicly to get him off to Green Bay before the Convention, that *they threatened to impeach his moral character if he claimed his seat*, and that they employed every effort to keep him out of that body so long as there was the least hope of accomplishing it; be it known, also, that the friends of Evangelical religion, believing Mr. Nash to be a worthy and pious minister, advised him to face the threatened storm, and vindicated his character and his rights;—and, lastly, be it known that the persons, (one half of whom were the self-styled “friends of the Bishop,”) to whom contested claims for seats were referred, reported favourably upon Mr. Nash’s case, and that he was admitted to the Convention by nearly, if not quite, a unanimous vote.

9. An attempt is made in pages 7—10, to prove the superiority of the High Church party over the Evangelical people in point of concern, for the advancement of the church. And how does Plain Truth establish this? By a fair appeal to the comparative fidelity with which the two classes of persons preach the gospel in the pulpit, and from house to house?—and by their several labours to recommend and spread far and wide the Book of Homilies, that standard exposition of the articles of the church? O, no, my reader, such a comparison would not have suited the object of Plain Truth, and therefore he adroitly passes by these obvious and equitable tests of love for the church of Christ. What then are his proofs? Why he points to their relative support given to the Bishop’s fund, the Society for the advancement of Christianity in Pennsylvania, and the General Missionary Society of the Episcopal church. But the weight of this evidence, it is plain, depends altogether upon the fact, whether these institutions are really calculated, and the best calculated, to promote the genuine interest of the christian church. If they are not, or if there are any better means of supporting this great object, then the friends of Evangelical religion, so far from being culpable, are praiseworthy in withholding their funds from the above institutions, and pouring them into channels where they will be likely to diffuse a greater blessing.

Now as it respects the first of these objects, what may be the particular opinions entertained by the different persons composing the evangelical portion of the church of this diocese, I am at present unable to assert; but this I can say *for myself*, that I am conscientiously averse to every thing like permanent funds for the support of the Christian ministry, or any other religious institution. I fear that every cent bestowed in this

way will be found in the end injurious to the cause of gospel piety. Let our ministers of every grade, and all our religious societies be kept completely and constantly dependant upon the good sense and the good feeling of the community. This is the best security for their proper conduct. But only make them *independent of the people* either by *permanent funds* or in any other way, and *you will at once have fastened upon you an establishment,—an ARISTOCRATICAL ESTABLISHMENT, unspeakably dangerous both to our civil and ecclesiastical liberty.*

Let then, all our ministers, I repeat it, of every grade, and all our religious societies be kept completely and constantly dependant upon the good sense and the good feeling of the people;—if they prove worthy, they will be supported. These remarks I offer as expressing solely my individual opinion; let them not then be charged upon any class of persons. There is one thing most certain, it is this ; if the foregoing sentiments be well founded, then no attempt to evade them, or misrepresent them, or to excite odium against the author, can avail to put them down;—their truth and importance will, sooner or later, be *felt and acknowledged.*

But evangelical persons do not contribute largely, says Plain Truth, to “the Society for the Advancement of Christianity,” &c. And is it, I ask in the name of human nature, is it to be for one moment expected that any body of men should be profuse in their donations to an institution confessedly “founded,”* and to this hour under “the controul”† of their opposers? And again, we are told that the evangelical people of the diocese do not give liberally to the General Missionary Society. To this I would reply, only let that institution be so constituted and conducted as, in its influence, to become in any goodly degree answerable to the great object of its formation, and no more complaints will be heard of the want of evangelical support. Till this be the case, it is no way surprising that the means of such persons should be bestowed upon more promising plans of usefulness.

10. The friends of Evangelical religion are charged with being “favourable to those plans of christian exertion, which tend to the amalgamation of Episcopilians with other denominations of Christians.”‡

If by this is signified that they wish union of effort with the other ranks of the religious world at the expense of their own *legitimate* principles as members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, then the charge is utterly denied. But if it be meant, that they desire all the real friends of the Redeemer harmoniously to co-operate in advancing the the interests of

* P. T. p. 8.

† p. 16.

‡ p. 11

His kingdom, and the salvation of souls, so far as they can consistently with their peculiar obligations,—this is the plain truth. Evangelical Churchmen profess to believe, and glory in the profession too, that all who really love the Lord Jesus Christ, do love one another, and that such persons, whenever they can honestly meet upon a common ground, ought,—it is a duty solemnly incumbent upon them, and is productive of the richest blessings,—such persons *ought* to “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

But we are given to understand that High Churchmen “desire general harmony with other persuasions of Christians.” And is this really the case? “By their fruits ye shall know them;”—apply this test. If then to denounce the ministry of Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, &c. as *unauthorized*, to look upon their congregations as *assemblies of schismatics*, to pronounce their ordinances *invalid*,—and to mention no more, —IF TO GIVE THEM UP MINISTERS AND PEOPLE, ONE AND ALL, TO THE UNCOVENANTED MERCIES OF GOD,—if these be likely means of procuring the respect and conciliating the good feelings of “other persuasions of Christians,”—then indeed are High Churchmen in a fair way of cultivating with them a most harmonious fellowship.*

* As a plain manifestation of this “desire of general harmony with other persuasions of Christians,” I quote the following passage from a High Church author:—“Great is the guilt and imminent the danger of those,” (forsooth *Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, &c.*) “who possessing the means of arriving at the knowledge of the truth, negligently or wilfully continue in a state of separation from the authorized ministry of the church,” (*that is, the ministers of the Episcopal Church,*) “and participate of ordinances administered by an irregular, and invalid authority,” (*that is, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, &c.*) “wilfully rending the peace and unity of the church, by separating from the ministrations of its authorised priesthood,” (*Episcopal ministers*) “obstinately contemning the means which God, in his sovereign pleasure, has prescribed for their salvation, they,” (*Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, &c.*) “are guilty of rebellion against the Almighty law-giver and judge: they expose themselves to the awful displeasure of that Almighty Jehovah, who will not permit his institutions to be contemned, or his authority violated with impunity.”—(Bishop Hobart’s Companion for the Altar, p. 204.)

Now, as a set-off to this high toned denunciation by those, whom a distinguished Arch-Bishop of the English Church characterizes as “*iron-hearted men*,” I will simply quote the words of two other Bishops. “The reformed churches,” says Bishop Hopkins, speaking of the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches on the continent, “observe different customs one from another, and yet they inviolably hold communion together, and *we with them*. The Gallican, Belgeck, Helvetian, and

11. Here I conduct my reader to the very *oasis* of Plain Truth's pamphlet. The sight is refreshing and delightful. There are spread before me on the 10th and 11th pages, extracts from no less than eight of the Articles* of the Church!

How goodly a thing it is, even occasionally, to meet with these precious doctrines in the discourses or writings of a

German Churches reject us not, nor we them,—for my part I freely profess, that were my lot cast among *any of the reformed churches* beyond the seas, I would presently join in their communion.” (“ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.”) p. 131—3.—“Let those *ill-invented terms*,” says Hall, Bishop of Chester, “whereby we have been distinguished from each other be swallowed up in that name which would lead us hand in hand to heaven, the name of CHRISTIANS. If my stomach, or any of yours, rise against the name of brotherly-communion, which may consist with our several principles retained, not differing in substantials, God take down that *stomach*,—why should some, in the height of their zeal for a Liturgy, suppose there can be no service of God but where that is used? Why should others, again, think their piety concerned and trespassed upon, if I prefer, and think fit to use, a set form? there must be abatements and allowances of each other; a *coming down from our punctilios*, or we shall never give up a good account to God.”

* Among other Articles of the Church, Plain Truth quotes that of Justification by faith only. As a High Church explanation of this article, I would beg leave to call my readers' attention to a passage from Bishop Hobart's “COMPANION FOR THE ALTAR.” “Repentance, faith, and obedience, will not of themselves be effectual to our salvation.” “We may sincerely repent of our sins; We may *heartily believe* the gospel, we may *walk in the path of holy obedience*; but until we enter into Covenant with God by baptism, and ratify our vows of allegiance and duty at the holy sacrament of the Supper,”—(Mark, reader, Bishop Hobart maintains, too, that it must be administered by an Episcopal clergyman,)†—“commemorate the meritorious sacrifice of Christ, we cannot assert *any claim to salvation*.”

“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,”—is that which Apostles and Martyrs, in the darkest hour of trial and suffering, hugged to their bosoms as the *precious truth of the gospel*, and the only and sure foundation of their hope before a sin hating God, and therefore have they, living and dying, ever held it to be “a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.” But in these statements by an eminent leader of the High Church Party, we are taught that “a man may *sincerely repent of his sins*, and *heartily believe* the gospel, and *walk in the path of holy obedience*—and yet if he do not receive the Lord's Supper from the hands of an Episcopal minister, the gospel gives him no claim to salvation.”!!!—(p. 189.) Now, whether this be the doctrine which the article teaches,—“that we are justified by faith only, and not for our own works or deserving;” or whether it be, *justification by the Lord's Supper*, let every candid reader judge.

† “It must be *essential*, to the efficacy of the Lord's Supper, as a *means* and *pledge* of divine grace, that it must be administered by those who have received *lawful authority* to administer it,”—(forsooth *Episcopal Ministers.*)—p. 200.

High Churchman,—though, alas, their presence is too apt to be

Like angels' visits, short, and far between!

Yes, and the faithful preaching and maintenance of these blessed truths by Evangelical men, is (after all the clamour raised against them by Plain Truth and his party, about Canons and Rubrics, irregularities and extemporaneous prayers, &c.*—*just to divert the attention of the public from the real point of difference,*)—*the faithful preaching and maintenance of these truly Scriptural Articles by Evangelical men is the GRAND CAUSE of the opposition to them.* And is there not a general awakening to this fact? Is it not beginning to force itself upon the minds of the most careless and prejudiced? and must not all these efforts to conceal it be in vain?

12. The friends of “truth and piety” are guilty of refusing, since the Convention, to put off the election during the present Bishop’s life.

Most certainly they did, and marvellous indeed must be his subtlety, who can construe this into a crime. For what was it but the fair exercise of that judgment, and determination of personal conduct to which every citizen of this free country is fully entitled?—But let us look at the Plain Facts of the case.

The opposers of the Evangelical people of the church in this diocese, without ever consulting them, or so much as hinting it to them, called a Special Convention for the purpose, (if it was deemed expedient,) of electing an Assistant Bishop; they chose their man among themselves, and came to the Convention fully prepared to support him. There, however, He who overruleth all things to his own glory, defeated their attempt.†

* P. T. p. 12.

† Apparently as a sort of explanation of this defeat, Plain Truth informs us (page 5) that “of the lay members who composed the Convention 52 were entirely new members, who had never been (as far as the Journals show) at any Convention before;” and then he gives us to understand, that of these fifty-two, thirty-eight invariably acted on the evangelical side. The impression which this historical statement is calculated, (and I suppose was intended) to produce upon the mind of the reader, is this,—The Special Convention, was nearly a *new body* composed *almost entirely of raw men altogether incompetent to decide* upon the matter before them,—and therefore it was not at all wonderful that Plain Truth and his friends lost their cause, or in other words, failed in the *attempt to place a High Church candidate over evangelical people in spite of their unwillingness to have him.*

Now whether the *honest farmers and other plain men* throughout the state who sat in the last Convention, will thank Plain Truth for the *ho-*

Thus discomfited, they turn about to those whom they had hitherto been so determinately opposing, and before whom they were then prostrate, and ask of them to pledge themselves not to use the advantage which providence had given them! Wonderful proof of a meek, forbearing, and pacific disposition, to seek to *bind* those whom they *could not beat!* And, O, obstinate Evangelicals, after being so heartily kicked and cuffed, still to refuse to bow down your necks to the yoke!

II. I now proceed to the charges of Plain Truth against the "Committee of Correspondence, &c."

After noticing the existence of this Committee, Plain Truth proceeds to advance several accusations against them.

1. They have signed a circular professedly put forth by the friends of "Truth and Piety"; 2. In doing so, the clerical members of the Committee are guilty of "barefaced dictation to the laity, and unbecoming intermeddling with their appropriate concerns"; and 3. By this act the whole Committee are guilty of "bold dictation, and interested counsels."

Now, my reader, we will here pause, and coolly examine whether these assertions of Plain Truth are borne out by Plain Facts.

At the time of the Special Convention, when "the friends of truth and piety," from all parts of the diocese, (who, be it again repeated, formed a large majority of that Convention,) were publicly together in a *public place*, they *unanimously* appointed brethren Boyd, Bedell, and Dupuy, of the ministers, and brethren Riley and Robbins of the laity, together with a number of other friends in different sections of the State, to be a "Committee of Correspondence, &c." to send such information, and to offer such counsel, from time to time, *to their constituents* with respect to the great object before the Church, as the Committee might deem proper. *In discharge of the duty thus openly and unanimously put upon them, they did send Circular letters—not to the Churches generally or to the laity generous*

light in which he has here held them up before the public, I know not,—but one thing I do know, the sentiment which he is desirous of inspiring with respect to the character of the late Convention, is not consistent with plain facts.

If indeed the Special Convention had been attended merely by the usual number of lay delegates which is about 58, then indeed the presence of 52 new members would have made almost a new body of lay delegates;—the very impression which Plain Truth's fallacious statement is suited to convey. But the unfairness of this assailant of the Convention will be manifest when the reader is informed of another fact, (which it best *served the purpose* of Plain Truth to keep out of view,) that more than *double the number* of lay delegates that ordinarily attend, was present at the Special Convention.

nerally—but to those whose freely and publicly appointed Committee they were. Such then are the plain facts.

Now, if to comply with the voluntary request of others “be bold dictation—barefaced dictation—unbecoming meddling,” then are this Committee guilty;—but if not, then the author of Plain Truth stands convicted of slandering them.

4th. Ah, but, says Plain Truth, this Committee are opposing the Bishop and his friends.

Whose fault is that? Who first stirred in this matter? Did not the friends of Dr. Wilson? The Plain Fact is, they did; they endeavoured to put Dr. Wilson into the Episcopate of this diocese. Now, how could those who in judgment and conscience disapproved of this measure, do otherwise than strenuously oppose it? Whatever their *personal* respect as individuals might be for some of the advocates of Dr. Wilson, (and upon this point Plain Truth rings many grievous changes*)—yet they felt constrained by a sense of duty to resist them as a party, because they verily believed that the appointment of Dr. Wilson to the office of Bishop, would be productive of great evil to the Church.

5th. The Committee stated in their Circular, that “circumstances had come to their knowledge which convinced them that the friends of Dr. Wilson were making efforts to secure a majority in the next Convention.”† “This statement,” says Plain Truth, “is unqualifiedly erroneous.”

Now, as the unsupported assertion of one pamphleteer is as good as another, so I declare that the “statement” is *positively true*.

6th. The Committee is charged with presenting a “*new qualification*” for the office of Bishop, and that of deputy to the Convention.‡

But what is this “*new qualification*?” Agreement with the Committee “in principle,”—and what is their “principle?” Professedly adherence to the interests of “truth and piety.” Verily this may be “a *new qualification*” to the mind of Plain Truth, it happens, however, to be about as old as the Bible.

7th. Again, they are pledged with their Evangelical brethren throughout the state, to “lay aside private and personal particularities, and act with unanimity in prosecuting the great object of their association.”

This is another charge brought against them by Plain Truth. But whether it be crime or not, depends entirely upon the *object* of their association. What then is that object? To promote the cause of “*truth and piety*.” And this is a thing so

* P. T. p. 19, 20. † p. 21. ‡ p. 19, 22.

offensive in the eyes of Plain Truth and his friends ? is it this that has called down the vials of his wrath ? is it to *crush this despised cause*, he spares neither daily efforts, nor nightly exertions? But—*magna vis veritatis, et prevalebit.*

8th. The committee are taxed with criminal inconsistency, because they earnestly opposed Dr. Wilson's election on the ground that "he was not a popular preacher, and was destitute of those sociable qualities which are essential to success in the Episcopal office," and yet in their circular they asserted, "our objections are not so much to the man, as to the opinions and policy which it is intended to support."

But where is the inconsistency here? The charge is plainly *a non sequitur*. The premises do not support the conclusion. Mark, the committee do not say, "our objections *are not to the man*,"—but,—"our objections are not so *MUCH* to the man as to the opinions and policy," &c.

The plain fact is, the committee opposed the election of Dr. Wilson *not merely* on account of his personal disqualifications; but because they conscientiously disapproved of his religious doctrines, and his views of church policy. Now great as the first class of objections may be; yet, it is evident, they are "not of so much" importance as the last;—nay, in comparison with a minister's religious and ecclesiastical principles, is not every *personal defect*, (except that of *piety*,) as the drop in the bucket to the mighty ocean?

III. I now take up the charges against "The Female Domestic Missionary Society of St. Andrew's Church."

These refractory women, it seems, are guilty, First, of organizing themselves into a society, (and what Canon or Regulation is there forbidding them?) to send the gospel to some part of the city or vicinity, where they might deem it most proper; and secondly, they are guilty of employing a missionary.*

And really, ladies, I see not how you can prove your innocence. Plain Truth has here hit upon plain facts.

I would advise you then, as a friend, at once to confess your guilt. Doubtless if you do so, and forthwith dismiss your missionary, and throw to the rust those needles which you have hitherto so diligently, (and as I was simple-minded enough to suppose laudably) employed, and immediately cast yourselves in sackcloth and ashes at the feet of Plain Truth—doubtless you will cause his very heart to sing for joy.

Alas, good women, it is plain you have fallen on evil days, when faithfulness in the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls, is a crime of deepest dye! But in the mean while as it

is the part of charity to minister consolation to the tried and the tempted, I will here suggest for the encouragement of these *persecuted females*, that if in this work they have been influenced in any goodly degree by love to Him, who has said, "Go preach the gospel,"—not to "*Episcopalians*," but—"to every *creature*!"—if this has been their animating motive, verily their labour shall not be in vain.

IV. We now come to the charges of Plain Truth against individuals; and first, those against the Rev. Mr. Boyd.

1st. This minister is guilty of having changed his "general views and policy."* I presume his religious doctrines and views of Church affairs are here meant.—If this be so, then I can say with certainty that the charge is true. But before this can be fastened upon him as a crime, it is necessary to show that his change has been for the worse. If, however, Mr. Boyd only "preacheth the faith now, which he once destroyed;" then, so far from reviling him for this transformation of character, methinks we ought to "glorify God in his behalf." Whether, therefore, Mr. Boyd was formerly an active opposer of gospel truth, and gospel piety, and has now become the open friend of both,—(these things, if true, must be *plain facts*,)—let then all who know him, and are competent to judge, decide for themselves. He stands before his Master and the religious world.

2d. He is charged with seeking the office of Bishop, and that by means the most disgraceful.†

As Mr. Bedell is also involved in this accusation, I would beg the reader to notice that his case is included in my answer,—the facts of both being alike.

These brethren are then, according to Plain Truth, "candidates for the Bishopric,—youthful aspirants to the mitre—and engaged in electioneering for themselves."

I would here fain throw down my pen; such baseness, either in the ACCUSED OR THE ACCUSER, is most painful to contemplate.‡

* P. T. p. 27. † p. 21, 2, 3, 6.

‡ To give my readers some idea of the malignant spirit which the pamphlet of Plain Truth is so well calculated to inspire, I will here simply relate a circumstance which occurred a few nights since at the door of a church. A person stepped up to the sexton and asked him who was going to preach. He was told that it was the Rev. Mr. Boyd; and the sexton added, "will you come in, sir?" "No," he replied, "I'd as leave see the DEVIL."—And then went on to say that it was understood Mr. Bedell was to officiate, and asked why he did not. The sexton informed him that Mr. Bedell had been suddenly taken ill. "Has he?" said the man,—"then I HOPE HE'LL DIE!!!!"

Upon being severely rebuked by the sexton for his horrible impiety,

But not only the character of these individuals are concerned in this charge, the most sacred interests of the Church also are staked upon it, and, therefore, it is a solemn duty to disclose plain facts. If Plain Truth has in this matter *slandered* Mr. Boyd and Mr. Bedell, then how wretchedly put to it must High Churchmen have been, to have employed such a *vile tool*: but if on the other hand these ministers be really guilty of the charge,—O how miserably *duped* have been the friends of “truth and piety” throughout the state!

Now what are the facts?—

There is *no candidate at all* on the evangelical side, and indeed cannot be till they assemble at Harrisburg. Further, so far from Mr. Boyd and Mr. Bedell’s having “electioneered for themselves,” as Plain Truth asserts, he has not, and indeed he cannot show, that they have *even countenanced* those who may have spoken of them as candidates. And, again, let the reader keep before his mind as a plain fact, and the most important fact too, in judging of the merits of this case,—that both Mr. Boyd and Mr. Bedell were publicly and unanimously appointed members of “the Committee of Correspondence, &c.” by the friends of evangelical religion in the last convention, (who, be it recollect, were a very large majority.)

Now, my reader, is it for one moment, to be supposed that these Rev. Gentlemen in order to avoid the foul accusations of opposers, are timidly to shrink back from the performance of the *most important duties thus publicly and solemnly devolved* upon them by the friends of “truth and piety throughout the Church, merely because A. B. or C. chooses to make them appear interested in the result of the election? If propriety does indeed dictate such a course as this to be pursued by those who fill public offices, then, who is there so blind as not to see, that it would be the easiest thing in the world for interested enemies simply by a blast of their mouth or a scratch of their pen, to tie up the hands and prevent the usefulness of the most capable, and excellent men in church and state?

3. Mr. Boyd is accused of having “travelled through the diocese, poisoning the minds of the laity against the Rev. Dr. Wilson, accusing him of not being sound in the faith, and holding erroneous sentiments, &c. &c.”*

Could any individual, really desirous of advancing the interests of plain truth, have ever adduced such a charge as this, without at least attempting, to give substantial proof of it? But as the author of the accusation has not done this, I might

the man immediately referred, in justification of his diabolical feelings and expressions, to the pamphlet of *Plain Truth*, and his kindred spirit “*An Episcopalian*.”

here let the matter rest upon a bare denial of it.—A righteous cause, however, can never suffer from an examination into its merits: I would therefore solicit the attention of the reader for a few moments to some *plain facts*, from which alone, after all, a judgment of the case must be formed.

If then Dr. Wilson is sound in the faith of the gospel, and his principles of ecclesiastical policy are such as are calculated to promote scriptural piety,—if these things, I say, be really so, and Mr. Boyd has represented them otherwise, then indeed does he stand guilty of poisoning the minds of others with respect to the Rev. Doctor. But if in truth Dr. Wilson be *essentially defective* in his religious views and Church principles, then no attempt to bolster up his reputation by laboured panegyrics upon him, or by seeking to blacken the character of others, can in the long run succeed. His fame, as a divine, must at last rest upon the doctrines he maintains, and the conduct he pursues; and not upon the representations of advocates or opposers.

And here in justice to myself, I must be permitted to add, that, it gives me pain to have been obliged to speak of this gentleman in such a connection. I did hope, that after those who had so indiscreetly brought him forward as a candidate for the Episcopacy, were disappointed in their attempt, he would have been permitted to spend the remainder of his days in undisturbed tranquillity. But that his name is again dragged into the contest he owes entirely to the kindness of his friends.

2. The Rev. Mr. Bedell is also impeached. He it seems was “the author of the motion—to introduce a coloured clergyman into the Convention, whose vote would have decided the election: and then to avoid the public notoriety of such an act,—sought to have it expunged from the journal of its proceedings.”*

This charge I know is laid by Plain Truth upon the whole of the evangelical portion of the Church also, but in truth they had nothing to do with it;—it was the spontaneous act of the individual.

Now, whether there be any thing improper or not in the conduct here ascribed to Mr. Bedell, plainly depends upon his opinion with regard to the right of the coloured minister to a seat. If he supposed the Rev. Mr. Ward was justly entitled to a seat, then what crime could there be in advocating his right to it? But this was, and still is, Mr. Bedell’s opinion, as he declared at the time, and has ever since asserted. And the plain fact is that Mr. Ward has, according to the constitution of the Church in this diocese, as perfect a right to

* P. T. p. 16—7.

a seat in the Convention as any other of the clergy.—“Every clergyman of the Church,” says the fourth article of the constitution, “*resident within the state, &c.*”—without adding a single word about the *colour of his skin*—“shall *ex officio* be a member of the Convention.”

“Ah, but,” replies the Standing Committee, “we stipulated with Mr. Ward when he was before us as a candidate for orders, that he was not to have a seat in the Convention.” WE!—and who gave you the right so to do? Permit me to tell you, gentlemen, with all due respect, that if this really be the case, you have assumed an authority to which you have not a particle of title. The Canons of the General Convention, (which alone has the power,) have prescribed certain qualifications for admission into the ministry,—to which qualifications no man, nor no set of men have a right “to add,—or aught diminish.” Now that such a stipulation was made with Mr. Ward, he himself has *solemnly, indignantly, and repeatedly denied*.

Again, it is strongly insinuated by Plain Truth that Mr. Bedell and Mr. Boyd, (who seconded the motion,) were aware that Mr. Ward would, if admitted to a seat, have voted for the evangelical candidate.* But both these brethren expressly denied at the time that they had any such knowledge. Nay, Mr. Bedell stated that he had not had any conversation with Mr. Ward since the call of the Special Convention, except once for about fifteen minutes, and then only upon the subject of his daughter who lived in his (Mr. Bedell’s) family.

With respect to Mr. Bedell’s desire to withdraw his motion, and to have it expunged from the journal, it was understood at the time, that he did this partly, at least, out of respect to the unhappy prejudices which he then, and *not till then*, perceived to exist in the minds of some;—the righteousness of the cause he had espoused, he never for a moment gave up. And though Plain Truth may still think it “questionable” whether “any abstract desire to secure to the coloured clergyman his constitutional and canonical rights controlled Mr. Bedell and Mr. Boyd in this attempt,”† yet certain it is that they did, both at the time assert, and ever since persevered in asserting, that it was just such a desire. Now, to which we ought to yield most credit,—to the insinuation of an anonymous writer, or to the solemn declarations of two well-known and responsible persons,—let the candid reader decide.

3. I proceed to notice a censure cast upon the Rev. Mr. Dupuy.‡

* P. T. p. 6. † p. 6.

‡ Plain Truth has really laid Mr. Dupuy under some obligations by

This brother "was baptised and confirmed by the Bishop," says Plain Truth, "received the sacramental elements from his hands, was brought up in his parish, received from him the ministerial commission:"—So far I believe all will allow there was no sin; but now follows the heinous offence of Mr. Dupuy,—he has, after closer, and it is to be hoped, devout examination, changed his views of gospel truth, and consequently there is a corresponding alteration in his ministerial conduct.

That this Rev. Brother is really guilty of every tittle of what is here charged against him, I have not the least doubt.

But here, as in the case of Mr. Boyd, I may fairly ask the assailant of Mr. Dupuy, before he lays his transformation of religious character upon him as a crime, first to prove by an examination of his *preaching*, and his *pastoral* and other *ministerial labours*, that the change wrought in him has been for the worse. Plain Truth thinks it is; I think it is not. Let the religious public, and especially those among whom Mr. Dupuy ministers in the gospel, judge between us,—they are the rightful arbiters, and to them, I believe, Mr. Dupuy may fearlessly appeal.

4. The Rev. Mr. Ridgely has not escaped.

1. He, it seems, is "a young deacon of short standing in the church."*

Query?—Does Plain Truth mean by this accusation, that the reverend gentleman is "young,"—say *twenty-eight years of age!* and that he has been but a "short" time in deacon's orders? If he does, then whether Mr. Ridgely will plead guilty of these high crimes and misdemeanors, I know not;—for myself, I verily believe he is guilty.

2. He is charged with having, "as a clergyman, resided hardly a month in the diocese,"† before the Convention.

Now, supposing this were the case, it is nothing at all to the purpose; the constitution requires "*residence*"—*not* for "a month," or a week, or even an hour, but *simply* "*residence*."

The Rev. Mr. Sitgreaves, one of Plain Truth's party, came into the diocese on the *second day* of the Convention; his seat, however, *they* did not question, but Mr. Ridgely's *they* disputed!

But the plain fact is, the charge is unfounded; Mr. Ridgely

the comparative respect with which he treats him; but for a most outrageous attack upon this Reverend Minister, see a pamphlet which I have noticed in the appendix. The peculiar hostility with which Mr. Dupuy is pursued, forces upon one's recollection that *special hate* which was manifested towards *christianized Saul* by his former Pharisaical associates.

* P. T. p. 5. † p. 5.

was ordained on the 13th of October, 1825, in this diocese, and never had ecclesiastical residence, (or, if the phrase is liked better, "never resided as a clergyman,") in any other.

3. Mr. Ridgely is accused of "an attempt to organize a congregation at Frankford, with the avowed design to increase their strength at the approaching Convention at Harrisburg, made against the known wishes of the reverend clergyman within whose parish Frankford is, and in the face of a canon."

What are the facts here?—Mr. Ridgely having been waited upon by persons from Frankford, and requested to preach there, went twice and officiated at that place,—being unconscious of offending against any canon. After this, however, being informed that the reverend minister of the parish disapproved of what he had done, Mr. Ridgely waited upon him, and finding this to be really the case, he made it a point never to preach at Frankford again.

4. He is charged with having written "a circular under the signature of Hooker," which is characterised by Plain Truth, as being "intemperate, disingenuous, personal, bitter, &c."*

Who was the author of this circular I know not, and I never before heard it ascribed to Mr. Ridgely. But if the production really be of so base and malicious a character, as Plain Truth describes it, then what must we think of the man who could publicly charge such a thing upon another, (and that other a minister of the gospel too,) without assigning, or even attempting to assign, *one iota of proof*?

4. Mr. S. J. Robbins is charged with having publicly insulted the Bishop,† and never publicly retracted.

The plain facts of the case are these:—It was moved, that a committee be appointed to ascertain and report the names of the clergy entitled to votes, and of those who are present; also the congregations entitled to seats; and such as are here duly represented."‡

Mr. S. J. Robbins opposed this resolution, assigning among other reasons, that he "feared, (or he *thought*—I do not distinctly recollect which word he used,) that the Bishop would not act impartially in the selection of the committee." At the moment in which Mr. Robbins made this remark, the writer

* P. T. p. 5.

† The proposition here offered, it was remarked at the time, was of an entirely novel character. Why this departure from the usual mode of organising the Convention was attempted, may perhaps be explained by the authors of it. Certain it is that it might have put it in their power to have formed just such a Convention as they pleased.

‡ P. T. p. 5. † Jour. Con. p. 12.

had his eye intently fixed upon him, and can testify, were it necessary, that he spoke in a manner most frank and good natured. Of a design to insult, none, I believe, who witnessed the transaction could, for a moment, suspect him; and whether indeed Mr. Robbins had *good reasons* for the opinion he expressed, those present on different sides will, of course, form different judgments.

5. Professor Coxe, of the University of Pennsylvania, comes in also for his share of accusations.

This gentleman is charged with having "published an irritating circular to the laity, full of erroneous statements, and unsound reasonings; with a few pretty plain insinuations of intrigue, &c.;"—in which circular he had "unguardedly undertaken to discuss a subject without the requisite information as to the facts and positions on which his arguments and deductions were to rest."†

That they who were most *touched* by this circular, should cry out against it, is a fact not at all to be wondered at; but, as the production itself, with these criticisms of Plain Truth, are both before the public, there it is most wise and proper to leave them.

Here, however, it would be doing injustice to my subject, were I to pass by without notice, the artful attempt of Plain Truth to set this gentleman at enmity with his pastor.† And certainly if Dr. Coxe had been a man of the weak mind and perverse disposition, which Plain Truth's critical remarks evidently show that *he thinks* him to be, then I see not how he could have escaped the *snare* which was so *cunningly* laid for him.

Having now gone through, and, as I trust, fairly answered the charges brought forward by "Plain Truth," it would be unbecoming in me—a man of *plain fact*, to pass over—

V. THE UNGENEROUS AND INJURIOUS USAGE WHICH PLAIN TRUTH AND HIS FRIENDS ARE CONTINUALLY MAKING OF BISHOP WHITE'S NAME.

It was observed by the celebrated Mr. Burke, that if you only open your ear, day after day, to a man's story, then, however false it may be, he will in time, make you believe it. Plain Truth and his associates seem to have profitted by this remark; for it is the very course which they are pursuing to fix themselves before the public as the real and exclusive friends of Bishop White. Nothing can be more long, and loud, and oft repeated, than their professions of friendship for him. And if there is any one of my readers who has been led away by these same constant, and confident boastings,

how will he stare at the charge which stands at the head of this section. But if *conduct most ungenerous and injurious* towards another, must destroy all confidence in professions of attachment to him, then clear as the sun at noon-day is it, that these “self-styled friends” of Bishop White are, in very deed and truth, his *worst enemies*.

Let us then bring these high sounding professions to the standard of plain facts.

And 1st. Is it not notorious that for purposes of the most *selfish, and party character*, these *would-be-thought friends* are continually pouring out upon the Bishop such a gross strain of flattery as might well sicken the heart even of the most vain worldly man? Now is it possible, I would here ask, for any character, however venerable, not to suffer in public estimation from such constant “*daubing with untempered mortar?*”

2. Is it not equally well known, that instead of permitting the object of their *interested adulation* to stand in the dignified attitude of the Bishop of the church, they are ever holding him up before the public in the humiliating light of the head of their party? The mischief they do him in this way, both personally and in the minds of others is, I verily believe, beyond calculation.

3. But there is another use most ungenerous and injurious, which these self-styled friends of the Bishop are wont to make of his name.

Have they any views, sentiments, &c., either doctrinal or ecclesiastical to be advanced or defended?—And how is to be done?—Doubtless, you will say, by an appeal to scripture, or the articles of the church, or the homilies,—or, at least, to the understandings of men? Not at all! such appeals would be troublesome, and perhaps, not always successful. What then is the all-subduing argument?—“THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP!”

And again, have they a society for educating, &c., or for any other religious purpose to get up,—or one of a similar sort to put down?—By what means is this to be accomplished? By fair discussion of their respective merits, &c.? O, no,—there is a much shorter way of arriving at the object,—“THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP!”

Is a measure to be supported, or a measure to be defeated, in the Convention? or is there an individual of that body who has dared to differ from them, to be silenced?—And what is the grand expedient to bolster up the one, and put down the other, and frown the third into atoms?—“THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP.”

Is a minister to be put over the diocese as its Bishop?—Well, doubtless, his *preaching* is pointed to as proof that he has qualifications to interest and build up the church?—or at least we have *one* of his discourses spread before us to show that he is *really* “pious, learned, sound,” &c.?—Not at all,—such “*dark attempts*”* may do for meaner folks! What then is the strong recommendation that is to sweep away all opposing currents, and bear him into office?—“THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP.”†

Finally, has any unfortunate *Evangelical* become specially odious to them by his faithful praying, or preaching, or writings, or life ‡—And what is the mighty stone with which the wretch is to be crushed?—At once *dash at his head*—“THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP!”

All these, my reader, are notorious facts; and every one, ever so moderately versed in the affairs of the diocese, will be able immediately to substantiate the most of them in his own mind, by a reference to times, places, persons, &c.

Now is it *generous*? is it *manly*, thus to *skulk!* and to shelter themselves and their designs behind another? and that other, to use their own phrase, “now in *full age* and *holy hoariness?*” Verily, such use of any man’s character cannot but injure him in the eyes of candid and reflecting people; by these oft recurring *party tricks*, his very name at last becomes associated with them in the minds of too many. For myself, I freely confess that the frequent observance of this pusilani-mous conduct has more than once *forced* upon my recollection a story which Ancient history records,—of a people who in their attack upon the Egyptians, placed the sacred animals of the latter in front, that behind this respected cover, they might with impunity assail and overwhelm their foes.||

4. I will notice but one other specimen of their “*ungenerous and injurious, &c.*” Indeed, it was so strongly marked, that it would be unjust for one, who has undertaken to exhibit plain facts, to leave it unrecorded.

During the Special Convention, these self-styled “friends of the Bishop” sometimes differed among themselves, with respect to the decisions of the chair—for, be it known, they are not in all things agreed (except in opposing the cause of “truth and piety.”) And how were these disagreements to be settled?—by a silent acquiescence, or a respectful appeal to the Convention? O no, this was not always so convenient, or con-

* P. T. p. 17, 31. † p. 15.

‡ As, for example Mr. Boyd, Mr. Bedell, &c.

|| The pamphlet of “Plain Truth” and “An Episcopalian,” may be pointed to as exhibiting throughout, this *dastardly stratagem*.

genial to their spirits. There was another and a better expedient. At times might you behold them—*Miserable visu!!*—a little lawyer, it may be, on this side of the Church, and a ragging Rector on that,—the first striving to pull the chair one way, and the last to drag it the other; and thus, between both, was it tossed hither and thither, like a pitiable wreck on the boisterous billows!

I describe plain facts—such as I saw with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears; and scores of persons might be appealed to were it necessary, who looked upon this painful scene with the same feelings of sorrow and indignation as I did. And yet these are the “*friends of the Bishop!*” These are the persons who have so vindictively pursued Mr. Robbins for one offence against him, which in comparison with their own every day *ungenerous and injurious* usage of the same person,—is as the small dust on the balance to the cloud-capt mountain! These are the persons who have assailed, with every species of obloquy, a very large majority of the late Convention—*pious and honest freemen*, from every part of the state—simply because they *dared to think for themselves, and act according to their own consciences* on the important matter before them!

What may be the immediate issue of the present contest between the Friends and the Opposers, of “Truth and Piety,” is not for short-sighted mortals to say; but of one thing we may be sure, the final event must be for His glory, who causeth the “wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof he restraineth.”

In the mean while, it is our duty “earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

APPENDIX.

When I had nearly finished the foregoing answer to Plain Truth, another pamphlet from the same party, fell in my way, entitled "An appeal to the Lay Members, &c." and signed "An Episcopalian." To give a separate and particular answer to this miserable compound of folly and falsehood, would, I fear, be a sinful waste of time. I shall, therefore, do little more than briefly characterize it.

His puling lamentation over the case of Mr. Ward,* and what he considers the fall of Mr. Dupuy, would be truly ridiculous, were not its hypocrisy so manifest. Indeed if Plain Truth assailed the last mentioned Reverend Clergyman with *whips*, An Episcopalian has assaulted him with *scorpions*. With a baseness equalled only by its *cruelty*, he rakes into Mr. Dupuy's *domestic concerns*, aims a blow at the peace of his *widowed* mother's family, and endeavours to set him at *variance* with his father-in-law. But this is not all.

The author of "An Appeal" is capable of other *dirty work*. And how any stomach of mortal man could stand such a *fulsome* load as this hollow-hearted sycophant here offers to the right reverend the Bishop, is to me wonderful beyond expression! If a strain of compliment that sets all asiatic adulation at defiance, be not a gross insult to a Christian minister, I am at a loss to know how he could be insulted.

And not to lengthen out my remarks:—AN EPISCOPALIAN, like all mighty masters of eloquence, rises as he advances, in vigour and pathos. His close is perfectly worthy of his production; it is a sentimental rhapsody about "*impetuous waves, mountains and valleys, pure water, gushing rocks, fragrant and healthful gales, forests and fields, early dawn, feathered songsters, happy innocence, wives and children,*" &c. &c.

One can peruse the production of Plain Truth with comparative satisfaction, because there is sense and decency in it; but a writer like "An Episcopalian," so stupid and scurrious, is read over with difficulty, thrown aside in disgust, and forgotten as soon as possible.

* Appeal, pp. 6, 7, 8.